

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for the Whittier-Anchorage Pipeline Tank Farm Property Transfer

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Introduction

The United States Army Alaska (USARAK) has been authorized to transfer to the Port of Anchorage (Port) the land known as the Whittier-Anchorage Pipeline Tank Farm (WAPTF) property. Figures 1 and 2 display a general location and vicinity map, and a site map, respectively. This property has also formerly been known as Defense Fuel Support Point-Anchorage. The focus of this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to identify and analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the property transfer, herein referred to as the Proposed Action.

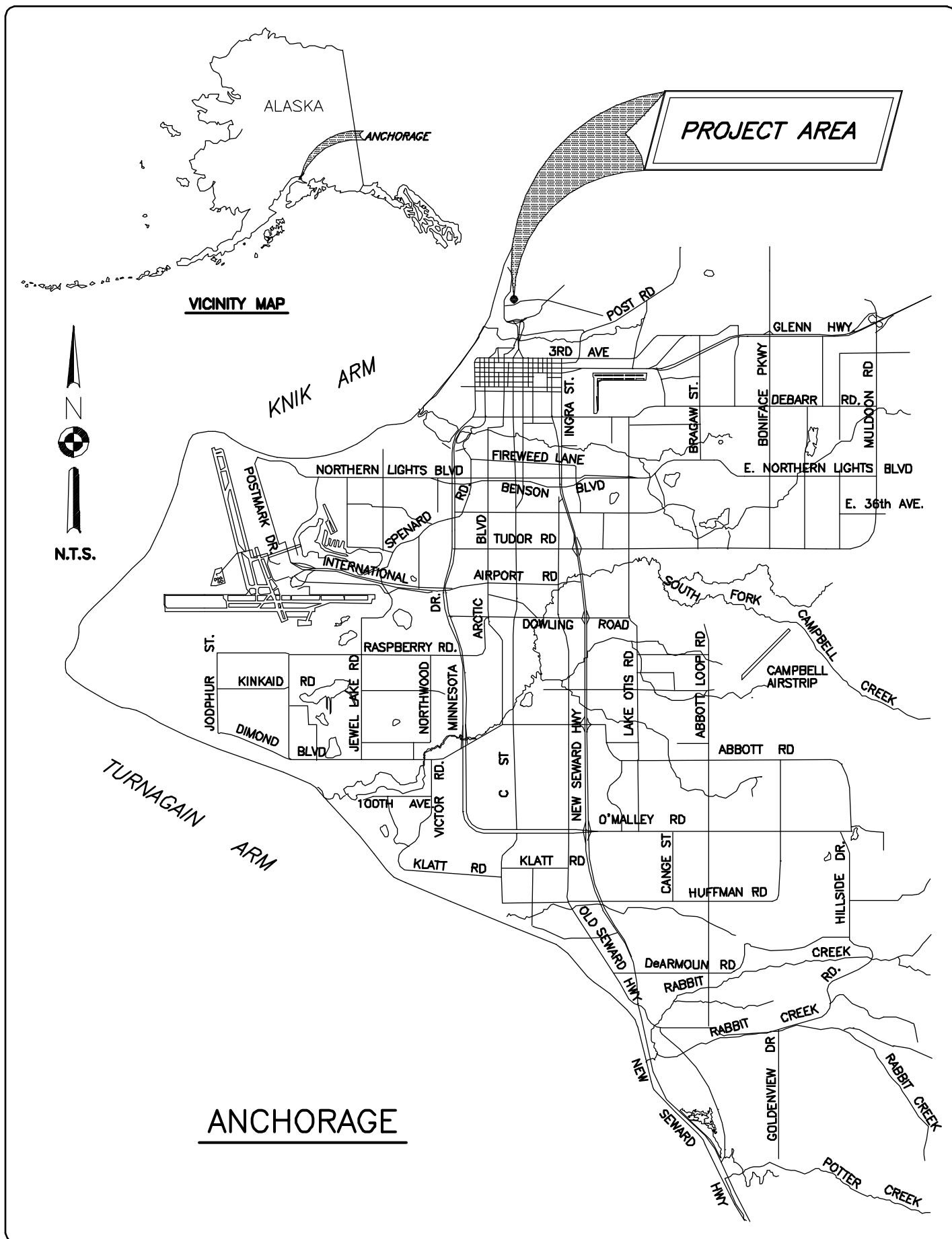
1.2 Purpose and Need for Proposed Action

USARAK operated the Whittier-Anchorage Pipeline Tank Farm as a fueling storage and supply depot from 1942 until final closure in 1996. The WAPTF property has since become surplus to USARAK's needs. The Port currently holds a lease on approximately 7.3 acres of the property (Figure 2), which has been the site of improvements made in support of the Port's ongoing intermodal expansion. Specifically, the leased property has been improved as part of the Port's Road and Rail Extension Project, described in the associated EA bearing the same name (ICRC, 2004). Improvements have included tree clearing and grubbing, slope stabilization and drainage improvements, the installation of perimeter fencing, and the construction of a new railroad track that feeds the east tracks of the Port's Road and Rail Extension. The leased portion of the WAPTF property is currently being utilized by the Port in these expanding operations. The area contains the moveable buildings of the Port's security Checkpoint 3 (Figure 2), associated paved parking areas, and underground electric and storm drain utilities. Construction plans for the leased property in 2006 include building a permanent Checkpoint 3 security building, and installing permanent water and sewer connections for the building.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to convey to the Port the entire WAPTF property for use in future economic development. The need for the Proposed Action is therefore to facilitate potential future Port expansion in this area, as well as to preserve the capital improvements already made on the leased portions of the property.

1.3 Location and Description

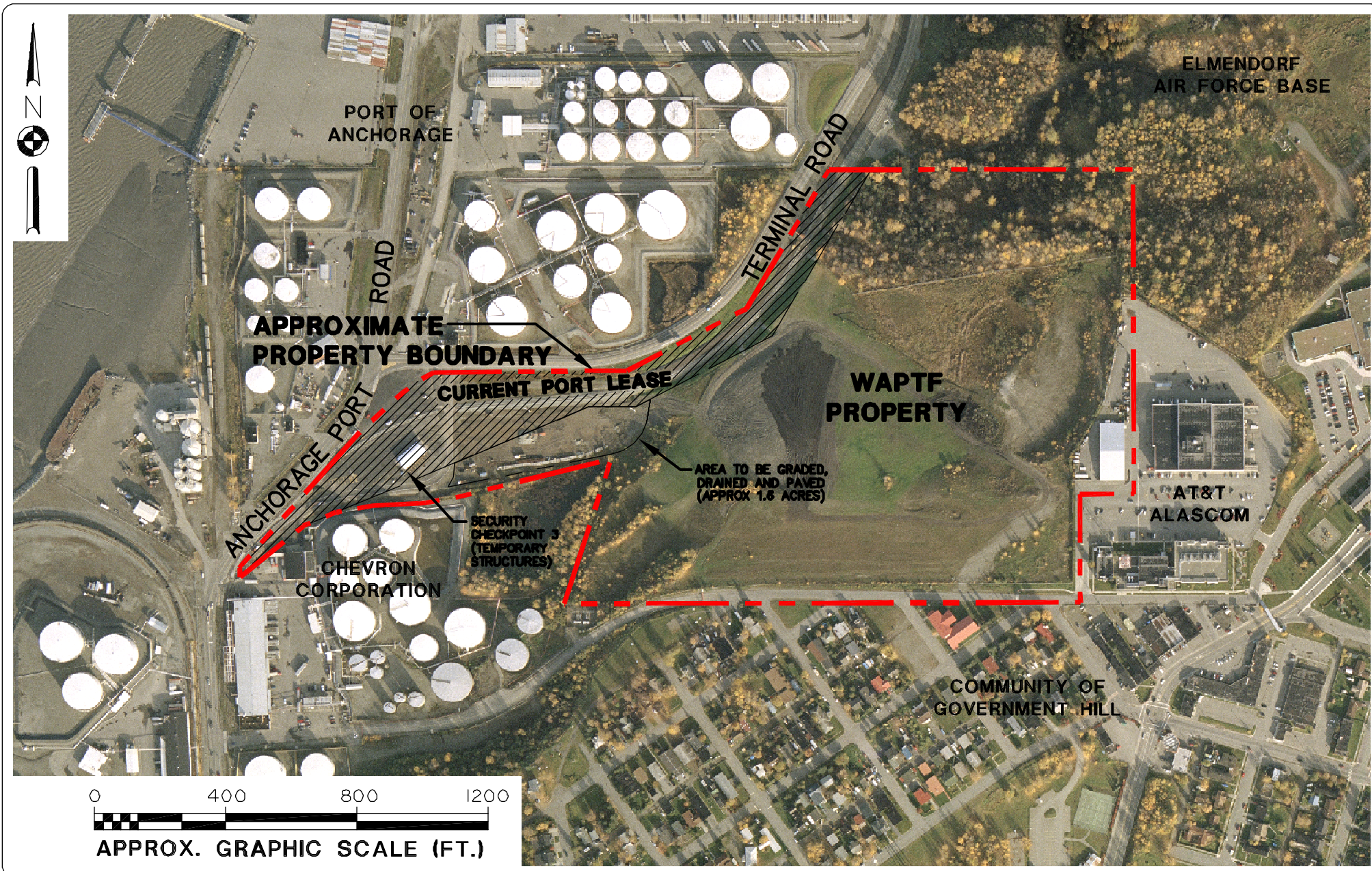
The WAPTF property is located in the southcentral region of the state of Alaska, adjacent to the city of Anchorage (Figure 1). The Port borders the property to the north and west, Elmendorf Air Force Base (EAFB) lies to the north and east, and the community of Government Hill



WHITTIER-ANCHORAGE PIPELINE TANK FARM PROPERTY

FIGURE 1
LOCATION AND VICINITY MAP





2005
AERIAL PHOTO

WHITTIER-ANCHORAGE PIPELINE TANK FARM PROPERTY

FIGURE 2
SITE MAP

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primarily borders the property to the south. Also neighboring the property is AT&T Alascom (a telecommunications company) to the southeast, and a tank farm operated by Chevron Corporation to the southwest (Figure 2).

The legal description of the WAPTF property is as follows. It comprises two adjoining parcels of land, Tracts Q and Y within Government Lots 10 and 15, being the S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 7, of Township 13 North, Range 3 West, Seward Meridian, Anchorage Recording District, Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), Third Judicial District, in the State of Alaska. Tract Q measures approximately 46.99 acres, making up the majority of the WAPTF property. Tract Y comprises the remainder of the property, measuring approximately 1.21 acres. The total land area of the WAPTF property is approximately 48.2 acres.

The Port retained a professional land surveyor to perform a detailed property boundary and easement survey of the WAPTF property. This effort has not yet been finalized with easements.

1.4 Scope of This Environmental Assessment and Decisions to be Made

Compliance with both the *National Environmental Policy Act* of 1969 (NEPA), and with *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions; Final Rule* (32 CFR Part 651, 2002) is a prerequisite to completion of the Proposed Action. They require the Army to assess the potential environmental impacts of transferring the WAPTF property to the Port. The scope of this environmental analysis is therefore limited to the potential impacts of the ownership transfer, as well as any additional impacts represented by reasonably foreseeable capital improvements to be made to the property by the Port. For the purposes of this EA, “reasonably foreseeable” is defined as follows: Any plans the Port may have for development will be considered reasonably foreseeable if funding for construction is already secured and/or preliminary design and planning has reached an advanced stage. If the plans are still in a conceptual phase, and funding for construction has not yet been secured, then the development will be considered as *not* reasonably foreseeable. Only improvements that are contingent on the property transfer are being evaluated with the above criterion. If a capital improvement will proceed independently of the WAPTF property transfer and is not “triggered” by the transfer, then that improvement is considered as *not* reasonably foreseeable and is not evaluated herein.

The purpose of this EA is to provide Army decision makers with sufficient information to determine if the transfer of the WAPTF property would trigger significant environmental impacts. If no significant impacts are identified, then a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) may be issued. If significant environmental impacts are anticipated, then an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be required. This EA will provide the decision maker with the information necessary to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic implications associated with the alternatives, and to determine if a FONSI is warranted. The following range of alternatives has been evaluated for presentation to the decision maker - Alternative 1: Transfer WAPTF property to the Port, and Alternative 2: No Action.

1.5 Related Environmental Analyses

The Port has held a lease on approximately 7.3 acres of the WAPTF property since 2004. The leased area has since been upgraded as part of the Port's ongoing Road and Rail Extension Project. The NEPA document entitled *Port of Anchorage Road and Rail Extension Environmental Assessment* was completed for the road and rail project in January, 2004. That document serves as the baseline for the environmental analyses conducted herein. Other ongoing actions at the Port are addressed in the following NEPA documents:

- *Port Intermodal Expansion Project: Marine Terminal Redevelopment Environmental Assessment*
- *Port Intermodal Expansion Project: Cherry Hill Gravel Extraction Environmental Assessment*